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We saw a lot of sights in London, most of which didn't impress me. I didn't feel connected to Buckingham and couldn't relate to Parliament. The Thames which has carried so many kings and queens was just a wide, grey, polluted river. The national portrait gallery was a collection of portraits of people whom you don't know and don't care about. It was like looking at another family's photo album. You smile and nod and mumble and wish you weren't there.

Hyde Park was just a large and lovely park like Golden Gate but with more flowers. Big Ben is just an old clock that doesn't keep very good time. Picadilly Circus is a subway-like crush of people mashed between exclusive shops. Trafalgar Square with its fountains and Nelson's statue is beautiful and impressive from a distance. However, once inside the square you're pelted with pigeon shit and quickly retreat.

We also went to the famed British Museum. It is filled mostly with bric-a-brac and geological junk from bygone eras. I'm sure that the materials presented have meaning to trained archaeologists. They can examine what were once common items in a dead society and deduce whole life styles and stories from the artifacts. The stuff was almost meaningless to me. I can just see the museum of the future. It will contain things like: a coke bottle - chipped, a mel mac plate, a scarred wrist watch, a cracked peanut butter jar, a rusted brownie camera, etc. Do you see what I mean?

There was one room, however, that captured my attention for some time. It was filled with glass cases that contained original manuscripts and stray pages from all the great English and European writers. In college I had read representative writings from most of them. I poured over these for some time for they were hard to read. They were written in longhand and being early drafts were filled with cross outs, start overs, and marginal notes. I walked from case to case absorbed but a little dissatisfied because I was having such difficulty in forcing coherency out of the works. About two-thirds the way through I came upon a letter from one writer to another. I think it was written by Oscar Wilde or Lewis Carroll but I could be mistaken because I didn't note down his name. He stated that he was burning all his old notes and manuscripts. He wanted nothing left when he died but his final published works. These, the final products, were important, not the residue. He felt it was crude for literary vultures to display or publish the scribblings and failures of writers when they died. I concurred and left the room.

One of the most mind grabbing sights of London for us was the Tower of London. Actually it is one central tower built by William the Conqueror in eleven hundred, surrounded by other towers connected by fortified walls. The walls inclose a large area of several acres. Outside, the walls are surrounded by acres of lawn and flowers. The Tower contains the crown jewels. I have never seen such splendid beauty. More than anything, I coveted the Star of Africa. It is a diamond as big as an egg and sits atop the royal scepter. As you gaze at it it collects all the light and color in the world and sparks it into your eyes. The slightest twitch of